

Mississippi River Basin

Bayou Meto Lower Arkansas Region Conservation Partnership Proposal

Lead Partner: Bayou Meto Water Management District

This project builds on strong momentum among landowners and existing partnerships that have been developed over the past through five years through the Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative. It will use the full suite of NRCS programs—EQIP, CSP, ACEP-WRE, and PL- 566—to address water quality degradation, groundwater declines, and inadequate habitat for fish and wildlife on acres of irrigated cropland. Local partners, including irrigation districts, conservation districts, state game and fish and resource agencies, farmer co-op, higher education institutions, and for-profit entities, have well-defined roles and supported contributions to the project.

Our Missouri Waters Targeted Conservation

Lead partner: Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR)

This project will use a collaborative statewide partnership approach called Our Missouri Waters (OMW) to implement geographic targeting of cost-effective farm conservation practices in identified high priority 12-digit Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) watersheds and catchment basins. A high partner match, clearly identified goals, and a nutrient trading program, currently under development, will ensure that activities will maximize improvements in water quality and wildlife habitat. Water quality monitoring and modeling will be used to evaluate the success of the project. The partners have a robust history of targeted working with producers, conservation implementation, and monitoring results.

Reducing Total Phosphorus and Sediment Loads in the Yahara Watershed through Wisconsin's Adaptive Management Option

Lead partner: Dane County Land and Water Resources Department

Wisconsin is the first and currently only state in the country to formally include an innovative, regulatory compliance option for addressing phosphorus, called Watershed Adaptive Management. The primary goal in this proposal is to engage the Yahara watershed agricultural community in this collaborative, watershed-based approach to meet water quality standards and test four alternative conservation innovations, paid for by partner funds. This project will enable a diverse coalition of partners, including agricultural producers, to expand the geographic scope of adaptive management efforts, test innovative delivery approaches, and serve as a model for collaboration between the water, wastewater, and agricultural sectors.

Shorebird Conservation Acreage via Drainage Water Runoff Control

Lead partner: Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Science, University of Illinois

This region in Illinois is a globally important stopover location for many species of conservation concern, especially the American Golden-Plover, and is used by millions of other migratory shorebirds and waterfowl. Creating temporary wetlands in strategic locations through NRCS's drainage water management (DWM) program will provide valuable conservation acreage for many migratory bird species. DWM provide numerous other benefits, including reductions in nitrogen and phosphorous runoff, improved water quality, and potential increases in crop production for the producer. The partnership aims to double the annual implementation of DWM in this region.

Iowa Targeted Demonstration Watersheds Partnership Project

Lead partner: Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Division of Soil Conservation

Directly tied to the implementation of Iowa's Nutrient Reduction Strategy, developed in response to the Gulf Hypoxia Task Force goal of 45 percent reduction in nutrients to the Gulf, this project will assist a strong, diverse partnership in standing up demonstration watersheds in nine focus watersheds, identified by a coordinating council. Conservation in these watersheds will focus on broad adoption of practices that are most beneficial in reducing nutrients and will serve as models for future work, with a focus on farmer-to-farmer outreach and education.